

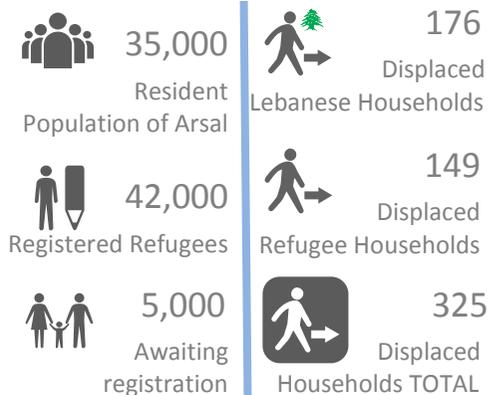
Inter-agency update on the situation in

Arsal and surrounding areas



LEBANON

9-10 August 2014



Background

While there have been no major outbreaks of armed violence since 7 August, intermittent gunfire was reported over the weekend, especially on the outskirts of town. There is a growing sense of animosity between the host community and the Syrian refugees. Attempts to provide humanitarian assistance led to further hostility between the local community and those who wanted to provide such assistance, including with respect to assistance to Lebanese Arsali. Discussions regarding rehabilitation of shelter options in Arsal was also perceived as unwanted. The current situation does not allow for the resumption of humanitarian operations.

Syrian refugees are reportedly still not allowed to enter or exit Arsal through the main road, and the roads leading to Ras Baalbek are also reportedly blocked. Reportedly, Lebanese can exit and enter Arsal unhindered.

Donors, including private ones, continue to support humanitarian and other efforts related to Arsal.

Humanitarian situation and response

Protection

The number of displaced from Arsal continue to fall. By Monday morning, 325 households (176 Lebanese and 149 Syrian households) remained displaced throughout the Bekaa, as most of the Lebanese Arsali have now returned home. Partners continue to assess their needs and provide assistance.

On the night of 9 August, a convoy carrying 1,086 persons returned to Syria, reportedly without experiencing any difficulties entering Syria. The convoy comprised of those who had stayed in Majdel Anjar, including persons without documentation and whose status had not been regularized. UNHCR was not involved in the movement and is neither promoting nor facilitating any returns to Syria, since the conditions in the country are deemed not conducive for return.

The situation of the Syrians stranded in Tniyi, outside Ras Baalbek, is increasingly a concern. Many are reportedly afraid of returning to Arsal and are not allowed to enter Ras Baalbek, and humanitarian partners have no access to them.

Shelter

An initial assessment suggested that nearly 1,700 tents in 21 informal sites had completely or partially burned, affecting over 3,000 households. The High Relief Commission has indicated that approximately 100-200 houses of Arsali were impacted during the fighting.

WASH

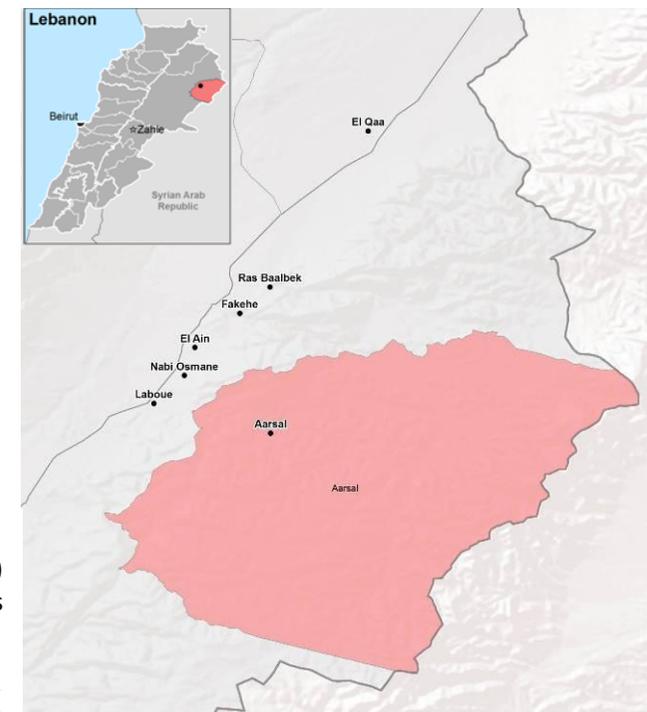
All boreholes are operational and providing water. In addition, 274,000 liters of water was distributed before the weekend. Initial reports confirmed that 55 water tanks have been destroyed. Local NGOs began a cleaning campaign, collecting garbage and cleaning the roads.

Health

Beyond's mobile medical units serviced informal settlements over the weekend and reported that the majority of cases involved old injuries or children having diarrhea.

Food and non-food items

All shops and two bakeries in Arsal are again functioning normally. Prices have allegedly not increased. Food supplies, including vegetables and fruits, from other parts of Bekaa were trucked to these shops. No NFI distribution was undertaken in Arsal during the weekend, reportedly due to the municipality not allowing the establishment of distribution points.



Syrian refugee women waiting in trucks in Masnaa.

UNHCR© /Sander van Niekerk



For more information please contact
Jean-Nicolas Beuze: beuze@unhcr.org